

Appendix G—CDCR Female Offender Reform

The CDCR Female Offender Reform effort recognizes the importance of developing gender-responsive strategies to address the specific needs of female offenders. The overarching goal of this effort is the development and implementation of a comprehensive gender-responsive female offender rehabilitation and management program. The CDCR encourages policies, programs, and procedures that foster personal growth, accountability, self-reliance, education, life skills, workplace skills, and the maintenance of family and community relationships. The objective is to promote the female offender's successful rehabilitation and reintegration into society and subsequently reduce recidivism.

By providing female offenders with the skills and treatment necessary to break the pattern of criminal activity, the CDCR is improving the female offender's chances of successful reintegration into society and helping to break the intergenerational cycle of incarceration.

Highlights of Recent Accomplishments

The following are highlights of the accomplishments of the Division of Adult Institutions, Female Offender Programs and Services Female Offender Reform effort:

Gender Responsive Strategies Commission

In February 2005, the Division established a Gender Responsive Strategies Commission (GRSC) as an Advisory Committee to assess and make recommendations on proposed strategies, policies and plans specific to women offenders. The Commission is comprised of representatives of community, state, local, legislative, and labor organizations; previously incarcerated individuals; staff representing the various disciplines within the CDCR and nationally recognized researchers in the field of female incarceration. Commission meetings are held bi-monthly.

Adopted Recommendations from the Little Hoover Commission, Senate Resolution 33 Committee, Assembly Bill 90, and the National Institute of Corrections

In March, 2005, the Division adopted the recommendations of the Little Hoover Commission (LHC), Senate Resolution 33, Assembly Bill 90, and the guiding principles of the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) report prepared by Drs. Bloom, Owen, and Covington.

CDCR Strategic Plan 5.3.6.

In April 2005, the Division developed strategies specific to female offenders that have been incorporated in the CDCR Strategic Plan 5.3.6. These strategies are based both on the data profiles of women offenders and a vision for reducing recidivism by targeting women's pathways to prison.

Elimination of Body Searches of Clothed Female Prisoners by Male Staff

On May 26, 2005, the CDCR revised its regulations and eliminated pat searches of female prisoners by male staff members. This was based on studies conducted by the Department of Justice which found that more than 57% of incarcerated females have been sexually or physically abused at some time in their lives, and on case law that established that body searches of previously victimized female offenders by male staff contribute to re-traumatization.

Phased Housing Plan

In January 2006, the CDCR developed a phased housing plan to shift 4,500 Level I and II female offenders to community-based, smaller facilities (Female Rehabilitative Community Correctional Centers). This will be complemented by provision of “wrap around” services including pre-release planning, gender-specific health care, education, vocation and work programs, as well as substance abuse and trauma treatment.

Examination of CDCR Classification System for Female Prisoners

In August 2006, CDCR contracted with Dr. Pat Van Voorhis, University of Cincinnati, to examine the CDCR’s current classification system in terms of validity, over-classification and assessment of risk/needs relevant to correctional rehabilitation with a focus on gender responsiveness. The formal evaluation of the existing system has been completed. A report was provided to executive staff on December 5, 2006, and the contract was secured for an expert to assist a task group with implementation steps and a design study for validating a new classification model for women offenders.

Leo Chesney Community Correctional Facility—Trauma-Informed Substance Abuse Treatment Program

This is the first trauma-informed in-custody program funded through the CDCR’s female offender reform initiative, as well as the first substance abuse program put into place in a community correctional facility. Gender-responsive services to be provided include substance abuse treatment and education, trauma treatment, life skills, recreational activities, relapse prevention, sober living skills, parenting and transitional planning for continuing care services. Individual, group, and family counseling will also be provided.

Female Residential Multi-Service Center

A Request for Proposal is currently being advertised for 575 female parolee beds statewide through a new program entitled the Female Residential Multi-Service Center (FRMSC). The CDCR has been providing services through the Residential Multi-Service Center Program since 1991; however, the programs have not been gender-responsive and served both men and women in one facility. This program has been developed specifically for females and addresses the needs of women through a gender-responsive program model. Gender-responsive services to be provided at the FRMSCs include conducting a risk and needs assessment, development of an individualized treatment plan, substance abuse education, treatment and counseling, trauma treatment, vocational services, life skills development, strengthening of family relationships, coordinated case management, establishment of alumni groups, referral to other agencies as needed and discharge planning.

Future Expectations

We expect that in 2007, the Division of Adult Institutions, Female Offender Programs and Services will accomplish these initiatives for California's female offenders:

- Create and distribute a Female Offender Master Plan that provides the framework for the programming and management of all female offenders.
- Award contracts and activation of female rehabilitative community correctional centers that house non-serious, non-violent female offenders.
- Design and implement a mandatory, 40-hour specialized, gender-responsive training for all CDCR staff members who work with female offenders.
- Begin the development of a gender-responsive classification system for female offenders.
- Implement an Individualized Treatment and Rehabilitative Plan (ITRP) which combines a risk needs assessment with an individualized case management plan for female offenders.
- Activate the Bonding Mother with Babies program for 20 female offenders and their babies at the California Institution for Women (CIW).
- Fully implement the Parent-Child Visitation program that will work to build and strengthen systems of family support and family involvement during the period of a mother's incarceration at the CIW.
- Complete the Planning and Design Summits that will assist with the development of a Master Plan for the women's substance abuse treatment in institutions and community-based programs.
- Activate the female civil addicts' participation in the community-based Drug Treatment Furlough program.
- Continue to recruit and hire social workers to support the Third Day Visiting program and the Chowchilla Family Bus Express and Family Reunification efforts.
- Review the final report of the Victimization and Female Offenders national expert and develop evidence-based interventions for female offenders based upon the nature of the identified findings of the national expert.
- Activate additional beds at the Drug Treatment Furlough program.
- Activate the Fresno Family Foundation Program.
- Activate the Community Prisoner Mother Program.

